DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 401 574 CS 215 584

AUTHOR Matsuda, Paul Kei
TITLE Crossing the Disciplinary Boundary: Teaching ESL Composition in the English Department.
PUB DATE Mar 96
NOTE 6p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Conference on College Composition and Communication (47th, Milwaukee, WI, March 27-30, 1996).
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Definitions; *English (Second Language); English Departments; Higher Education; Instructional Innovation; *Interdisciplinary Approach; Models; Second Language Instruction; *Student Needs; *Theory Practice Relationship; *Writing Instruction
IDENTIFIERS *Writing Contexts

ABSTRACT

Although the number of English as a Second Language (ESL) students in United States colleges and universities has increased over the past decades, there has been no corresponding increase in the level of attention given to the special needs of these students in composition classrooms. ESL students are likely to be found in writing classrooms at any level, but ESL-trained instructors may or may not be trained in the teaching of ESL writing. Existing definitions of the field discourage teachers of composition from teaching or learning about ESL students. An alternative symbiotic model, however, situates second language writing studies in various instructional contexts, unlike the division of labor model which sees ESL writing as the responsibility of ESL specialists and not of composition professionals. The intersection model (which sees second language writing situated at the intersection of second language studies and composition studies) places second language writing as a subfield of second language studies. The symbiotic model sees the constituting disciplines as interdependent; second language writing provides more than a site of interaction between the two disciplines--it connects theory and research on second language writing with praxes that are situated in both second language and composition classrooms. This model can facilitate the development of research methodologies that are appropriate for the unique problems of composing in a second language. (Contains 4 figures and a table of models of second language writing.) (NKA)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND
DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL
HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
P Matsuda
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

ED 401 574

Crossing the Disciplinary Boundary: Teaching ESL Composition in English Department

Conference on College Composition and Communication, Milwaukee, WI. 29 March 1996.

by Paul Kei Matsuda
Purdue University

Although the number of English as a Second Language (ESL) students in US colleges and universities has increased over the past few decades, there has not been a corresponding increase in the level of attention given to the special needs of these students in composition classrooms. For example, the distribution of ESL-trained teachers in college-level writing programs has been limited to some of the special ESL courses, while ESL students are likely to be found in writing classrooms at any level (see fig. 1). This tendency may be related to the way the field of second language writing has been positioned in relation to its neighboring disciplines. In this paper, I problematize existing definitions of the field—the division of labor model and the intersection model—that discourage teachers of composition from teaching or learning about ESL students. I will then propose an alternative model—the symbiotic model—that situates second language writing studies in various instructional contexts.

Fig. 1. Distribution of ESL-Trained Teachers

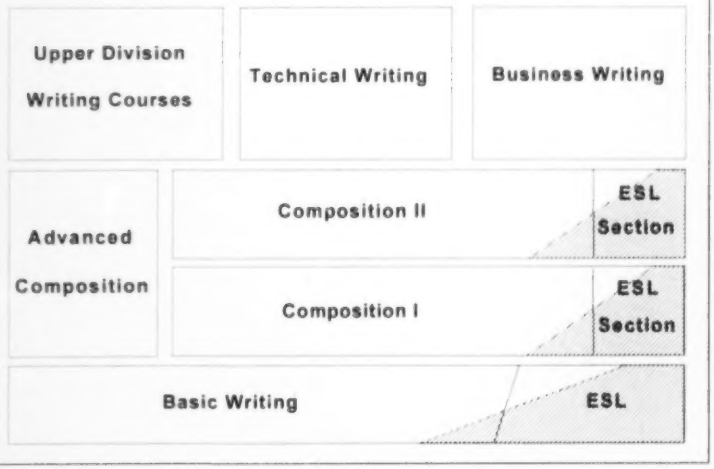


Figure 1 is a generalized representation of composition programs in four-year colleges and universities. Shaded areas represent the distribution of ESL-trained instructors, who may or may not be trained in the teaching of ESL *writing* (Roy). Writing centers and ESL programs outside of English department are not included in this diagram. Not all institutions have the same structure, and many do not have any ESL components.

CS215584

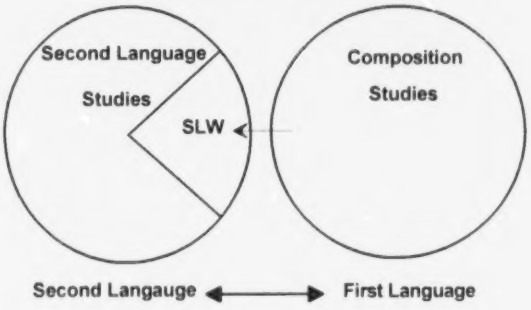
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION
CENTER (ERIC)
☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Division of Labor Model

Teachers and administrators of composition tend to think that ESL writing is the responsibility of ESL specialists and not of composition professionals (Roy). This "*division of labor*" *model* (see fig. 2) views second language writing as part of second language studies. This

Fig. 2. Division of Labor Model

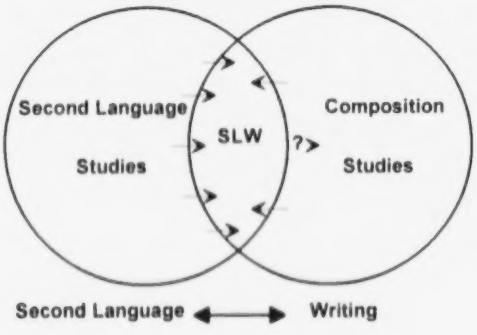


model does not acknowledge some composition specialists' effort to help ESL writers, nor does it encourage interdisciplinary cooperation in addressing the needs of ESL writers (Santos, "Response").

Intersection Model

Others see second language writing as situated at the "intersection of second language studies and composition studies" (Silva, Leki, and Carson 1). Although this *intersection model* (see fig. 3) connects second language writing with composition studies in a significant way, it

Fig. 3. Intersection Model

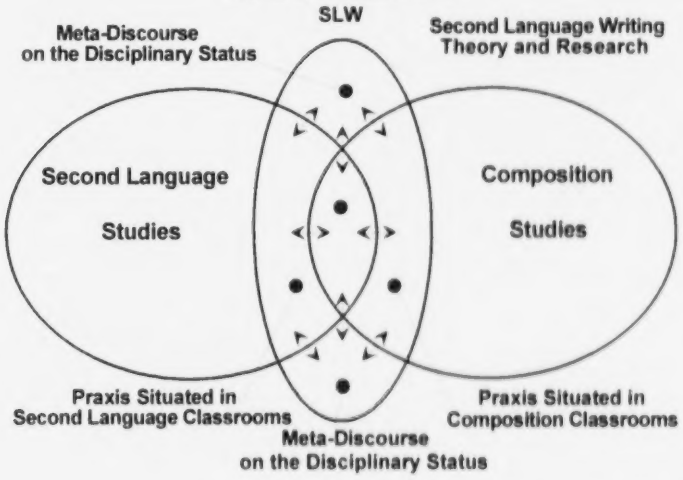


continues to see second language writing as a subfield of second language studies, which provides the methodological and disciplinary paradigm.

Symbiotic Model

Alternatively, the relationship between second language writing and its related disciplines can be characterized as a *symbiotic relationship*, in which the constituting disciplines are interdependent with one another (see fig. 4). In this *symbiotic model*, second language writing

Fig. 4. Symbiotic Model



provides much more than a site of interaction between the two disciplines; it connects theory and research on second language writing with praxes that are situated in both second-language and composition classrooms.

Second language writing in the symbiotic model also has its own meta-discourse—discourse about its methodologies and its status in a cross-disciplinary context (e.g., this paper). In other words, second language writing is defined as an emerging discipline rather than a field within a discipline. This model can facilitate the development of research methodologies that are

appropriate for the unique problems of composing in a second language. It also points out the need to develop praxes situated in ESL and non-ESL writing classrooms alike.

Models of Second Language Writing: A Comparison Table

	Division of Labor	Intersection	Symbiotic
binaries	• L2 / L1; ESL / basic writing† • pragmatic / ideological‡ • science / critical theories‡	• L2 / writing • ESL / "mainstream"*	• L2 / writing • praxis in L2 classrooms / praxis in writing classrooms
site of research	• L2 studies (borrowing findings and methodologies from comp studies)*‡	• intersection or L2 and comp studies*	• L2 studies • comp studies • second language writing
teachers	• ESL specialists	• teachers of ESL courses or sections	• all writing teachers* • all ESL teachers
site of praxes	• ESL courses	• ESL writing courses and ESL sections of composition courses	• all writing courses* • all ESL courses
meta-discourse on discip. status	• part of L2 • borrowed from composition	• part of L2 • borrowed from composition	• part of second language writing
problems, inconsistencies	• does not encourage interdisciplinary cooperation	• SLW is dependent on L2 studies • SLW is still not part of comp	• not enough meta-discourse • few studies situated in composition
main sources	*Johns; †Roy; ‡Santos, "Ideology"	* Silva; Silva, Leki, and Carson	* Matsuda

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Selected Bibliography

Johns, Ann. "Too Much on Our Plates." *Journal of Second Language Writing* 2 (1993): 83-88.

Matsuda, Paul Kei. "Diversity in the Writing Classroom: Preparing Graduate Students to Teach ESL Students." Reconceiving Graduate Education in Writing Conference. DePaul U, Chicago. 3 February 1996.

Roy, Alice M. "ESL Concerns for Writing Program Administrators: Problems and Policies." *Writing Program Administration* 11 (1988): 17-28.

Santos, Terry. "Ideology in Composition: L1 and ESL." *Journal of Second Language Writing* 1 (1992): 1-15.

Santos, Terry. "Response to Ann Johns." *Journal of Second Language Writing* 2 (1993): 89-90.

Silva, Tony. "English as a Second Language, Composition." *Encyclopedia of English Studies and Language Arts.* Ed. Alan Purves. Vol. 1. New York: Scholastic, 1994. 435-437.

Silva, Tony, Ilona Leki, and Joan G. Carson. "Broadening the Perspective of Mainstream Composition Studies: Some Thoughts from the Disciplinary Margins." Unpublished manuscript.